

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 06842 021820Z

42

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3146

INFO USMISSION USUN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 6842

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR,SS , SP

SUBJ: SPANISH SAHARA

REF : (A) MADRID 6625 (EXDIS)

(B) RABAT 4714 (EXDIS)

(C) ALGIERS 2093 (EXDIS)

1. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LAINGEN AND I CALLED ON UNDER SECRETARY ROVIRA TODAY, WHO IS ACTING IN CHARGE OF FOREIGN MINISTRY IN CORTINA'S ABSENCE. ROVIRA, WITH DIRGEN OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS AGUIRRE DE CARCER AND DIRGEN OF NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS PERINAT PRESENT, HAD DISTURBING THINGS TO SAY ABOUT THE SAHARA ISSUE.

2. ROVIRA TOLD US THE SPANISH HAD INTELLIGENCE INDICATING THE MOROCCANS WOULD ATTACK IN THE SAHARA AT THE END OF RAMADAN (OCTOBER 7). THE CORTINA/LARAKI CONVERSATIONS IN NEW YORK HAD BEEN PLEASANT , GIVING NO INDICATION TTHAT THE MOROCCANS WERE CONTEMPLATING HOSTILITIES, BUT A QUADRIPARTITE MEETING SEEMED OUT, AND ONE COULD NOT BE SURE TWHAT MOROCCO REALLY HAD IN MIND. IN VIEW OF SPAIN'S INTELLIGENCE, IT WOULD CERTAINLY BE USEFUL FOR US TO DO WHAT IT COULD TO RESTRAIN THE MOROCCANS FROM LAUNCHING AN ATTACK.

3. WE EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN
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PAGE 02 MADRID 06842 021820Z

SPAIN AND MOROCCO AS AN APPROACH TO DEFUSING ANY SUCH POSSIBILITY.

WHEN ASKED WHAT SPAIN WOULD DO IN THE EVENT OF MOROCCAN MILITARY ACTION, ROVIRA SAID THE SPANISH WOULD DEFEND THEMSELVES. IT COULD NOT SIMPLY LEAVE IN THE FACE OF AN ATTACK.

4. WE DID NOT PRESS ROVIRA ON THE NATURE OF THEIR INTELLIGENCE, WHICH COULD BE BASED ON THE CONJUNCTION OF CIRCUMSTANCES REPORTED IN RABAT'S LATEST MESSAGE (REF. B.) AT ALL EVENTS, HOWEVER, WE CANNOT IGNORE ROVIRA'S STATEMENT REGARDING POSSIBILITY OF IMMINENT HOSTILITIES. WE WILL BE QUERYING OTHER SOURCES IN THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT MAY HAVE.
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